

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (previously presented): A recording medium managing apparatus comprising:

recording medium readout means for reading out recording information from a first area on a loaded recording medium;

identification information supplying means for supplying identification information;

recording medium writing means for prohibiting writing the identification information in a second area on the recording medium when first recording information indicates that the second area is used for recording and for writing the identification information in the second area and writing second recording information indicating that the second area is used for recording in the first area when the first recording information indicates that the second area is not used for recording;

management information storing means for storing management information linking identification information recorded in the second area and attribute information for content items of the recording medium recording the identification information, wherein

the recording medium readout means updates management information of the management information storing means by reading out the identification information from the second area and reading out the attribute information from a third area on the recording medium when the recording information indicates that the second area is used for recording; and

menu generating means for generating a menu displaying the disk identification information and corresponding attribute information of content items of the loaded recording medium and previously loaded recording mediums based on the management information stored in the management information storing means, wherein

the identification information supplying means includes character string inputting means for inputting arbitrary character strings, and

at least part of the identification information includes an arbitrary character string input by the character string inputting means.

Claim 2 (original): The recording medium managing apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein,

the identification information supplying means includes apparatus information storing means for storing apparatus information unique to the recording medium managing apparatus and counting means for generating a unique serial number at the recording medium managing apparatus, and

at least part of the identification information includes the apparatus information and the serial number.

Claim 3 (canceled).

Claim 4 (original): The recording medium managing apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein,

the third area on the recording medium stores an index file including the attribute information, and

the recording medium readout means reads out the attribute information from the index file and updates the management information of the management information storing means.

Claim 5 (cancelled).

Claim 6 (previously presented): The recording medium managing apparatus according to Claim 1, further comprising:

name conversion information storing means for storing name conversion information linking the identification information and the arbitrary character string input by the character string inputting means, wherein,

the recording medium writing means updates the name conversion information of the name conversion information storing means when writing the identification information in the second area, and

the menu generating means displays the arbitrary character string together with the attribute information, the arbitrary character string being linked to the identification information of the recording medium by the name conversion information.

Claim 7 (previously presented): The recording medium managing apparatus according to Claim 1, further comprising:

instruction inputting means for assigning the content item to be played using the menu,

wherein the recording medium readout means reads out the content item if the recording medium storing the assigned content item is loaded.

Claim 8 (original): The recording medium managing apparatus according to Claim 7, further comprising:

network connecting means for communicating with a network connecting another recording medium managing apparatus,

wherein, if the recording medium storing the assigned content items is not loaded, the recording medium readout means inquires the other recording medium managing apparatus through the network connecting means whether or not the recording medium is loaded and, if the recording medium is loaded into the other recording medium managing apparatus, the recording medium readout means requests the transmission of the assigned content item.

Claim 9 (original): The recording medium managing apparatus according to Claim 1, further comprising:

content-supplying means for supplying a content item;

suspended-content-storing means for storing a content item suspended from being written in a recording medium; and

suspension information storing means for storing suspension information linking identification information of a recording medium that is the recording destination of the suspended content item and attribute information of the suspended content item,

wherein, if the recording medium that is the recording destination of the content item supplied from the content-supplying means is not loaded, the recording medium writing means

stores the supplied content item in the suspended-content-storing means and updates the suspension information of the suspension information storing means.

Claim 10 (original): The recording medium managing apparatus according to Claim 9, wherein

the recording medium readout means detects suspension information including the identification information read out from the second area from the suspension information storing means, and

the recording medium writing means records the suspended content item stored in the suspended-content-storing means on the recording medium on the basis of the attribute information included in the detected suspension information and updates the management information of the management information storing means.

Claim 11 (original): The recording medium managing apparatus according to Claim 10, further comprising:

network connecting means for communicating with a network connecting another recording medium managing apparatus, wherein

the recording medium readout means inquires the other recording medium managing apparatus through the network connecting means whether or not the other recording medium managing apparatus stores the suspension information including the identification information read out from the second area and, if the suspension information is stored in the other recording medium managing apparatus, requests the transmission of the suspended content item related to the suspension information to the other recording medium managing apparatus, and

the recording medium writing means records the suspended content item transmitted from the other recording medium managing apparatus or the recording medium and updates the management information of the management information storing means.

Claim 12 (previously presented): A method of managing a recording medium for a recording medium managing apparatus including management information storing means for storing management information linking identification information and attribute information of content items of a recording medium recording the identification information, and character string inputting means for inputting arbitrary character strings, the method comprising the steps of:

- reading out recording information from a first area on a recording medium;
- receiving supplied identification information when the recording information indicates that the second area is not used for recording;
- writing the supplied identification information in the second area and writing recording information indicating that the second area is used for recording in the first area;
- updating the management information of the management information storing means by reading out the identification information from the second area and reading out the attribute information from a third area on the recording medium when the recording information indicates that the second area is used for recording;
- generating a menu displaying the disk identification information and corresponding attribute information of content items of the loaded recording medium and previously loaded recording mediums based on the management information stored in the management information storing means, wherein
 - at least a part of the supplied identification information includes an arbitrary character string input by the character string inputting means.

Claim 13 (original): A method of managing a recording medium for a recording medium managing apparatus including management information storing means for storing management information linking identification information and attribute information of content items of a recording medium recording the identification information, suspended-content-storing means for storing a content item suspended from being written in a recording medium, and suspension information storing means for storing suspension information linking the identification information of a recording medium that is the recording destination of the suspended content item and the attribute information of the suspended content item, the method comprising the steps of:

- reading out first recording information from a first area on the recording medium;
- receiving supplied identification information when the first recording information indicates that the second area is not used for recording;
- writing the supplied identification information in the second area and writing second recording information indicating that the second area is used for recording in the first area;
- receiving a instruction for recording a content item on an assigned recording medium; and
- storing the content item instructed to be recorded in the suspended-content-storing means and updating the suspension information of the suspension information storing means when the assigned recording medium is not loaded.

Claim 14 (original): The method of managing a recording medium according to Claim 13, the method further comprising the steps of:

- reading out the identification information from the second area of a loaded recording medium;
- detecting the suspension information including the read out identification information from the suspension information storing means; and
- recording the suspended content item stored in the suspended-content-storing means on the recording medium on the basis of the attribute information including the detected suspension information and updating the management information of the management information storing means.

Claim 15 (original): The method of managing a recording medium according to Claim 13, the method further comprising the steps of:

reading out the identification information from the second area of the loaded recording medium;

inquiring another recording medium management apparatus whether or not the other recording medium management apparatus stores the suspension information including the identification information read out from the second area;

requesting the transmission of the suspended content item related to the suspension information to the other recording medium management apparatus if the suspension information is stored in the other recording medium management apparatus; and

recording the suspended content item sent from the other recording medium management apparatus on the loaded recording medium and updating the management information of the management information storing means.

Claim 16 (previously presented): A computer program product embodied in a computer readable medium storing a program for a recording medium managing apparatus including management information storing means for storing management information linking identification information and attribute information of content items of a recording medium recording the identification information, and character string inputting means for receiving arbitrary character strings, the program instructing a computer to execute the steps of:

reading out first recording information from a first area on a recording medium;

receiving supplied identification information if the first recording information indicates that the second area is not used for recording;

writing the supplied identification information in the second area and writing second recording information indicating that the second area is used for recording in the first area;

updating the management information of the management information storing means by reading out the identification information from the second area and reading out the attribute information from a third area on the recording medium when the first recording information indicates that the second area is used for recording;

generating a menu displaying the disk identification information and corresponding attribute information of content items of the loaded recording medium and previously loaded recording mediums based on the management information stored in the management information storing means, wherein

at least a part of the supplied identification information includes an arbitrary character string input by the character string inputting means.

Claim 17 (previously presented): A computer program product embodied in a computer readable medium storing a program for a recording medium managing apparatus including management information storing means for storing management information linking identification information and attribute information of content items of a recording medium recording the identification information, suspended-content-storing means for storing a content item suspended from being written in a recording medium, and suspension information storing means for storing suspension information linking identification information of a recording medium that is the recording destination of the suspended content item and attribute information of the suspended content item, the program instructing a computer to execute the steps of:

reading out first recording information from a first area on a recording medium;

receiving supplied identification information when the first recording information indicates that the second area is not used for recording;

writing in the supplied identification information in the second area and writing in second recording information indicating that the second area is used for recording in the first area;

receiving an instruction of recording a content item to an assigned recording medium; and

storing the content item instructed to be recorded in the suspended content item storing means and updating the suspension information of the suspension information storing means when the assigned recording medium is not loaded.

Claim 18 (previously presented): The recording medium managing apparatus according to Claim 1, further comprising:

inputting means for assigning a column pertaining to a type of item using the menu,

wherein the content items in the menu are sorted by order according to the specified column.

Claim 19 (previously presented): The recording medium managing apparatus according to Claim 1, further comprising:

inputting means for assigning a search criteria for a type of item using the menu,

wherein only the content items meeting the search criteria are displayed.